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The Old Tractor Trail

Suzanne Nance

I walk alone in the snowy field.
Last summer's tall grasses
Poke their long brown blades
Through the icy crust.
As I walk along the rutted path,
My foot slips into the trough,
The old tractor trail
Running through the pasture.
I watch my feet more carefully now,
Stepping with purpose and attention.
It's then I notice
The emerald green carpet
Down beneath the crushed, brown decay
Concealed below my feet
Alive and vibrant
Never dormant.
I stop to admire,
Bending low to the earth
Examining my find.
My gloved finger reaches down,
Stroking a small clump
Resiliently glued to a clot of dirt.
Radiant green, in tiny stems.
Brilliant color offsetting the drab of winter
Life in an otherwise comatose zone.
Oh the wonders of the moss.
Keeping its primordial life simple.
Unencumbered by seasons,
By light or dark,
Continuing its existence eternal.
Some would say hardy,
Others may regard it as insignificant.
It exists as it is
Splendid in all its color,
Tiny and delicate
Yet enduring and steadfast.
What more should a life be?
The under layer and foundation
Always present, near at hand,
Uncomplicated yet unique
Simple and beautiful

The hawk that flies to the nearby tree
Scolds me for my delay.
I leave my thoughts
And return to the immediate.
Lifting my head skyward from the furrow,
I gaze about the prairie that surrounds me.
Snow blankets the field.
Last summer's wild flowers
Remain only in broken, pithy shoots.
The tall stock of the Queen Ann's Lace
Elevates its fireworks arrayed scaffolding,
While the unpalatable burrs and thistles
Remain intact and upright.
I turn once more toward my path.
The sunken tractor trail leads onward.
I exhale completely.